CLINICAL VERIFICATION

FAGOPYRUM ESCULENTUM – A Multicentric Clinical Verification Study conducted by CCRH

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Fagopyrum esculentum has been used in Homoeopathy for many conditions like diarrhea, eczema, various eyes affections, headache, itching eruptions, pruritus pudenda, sore throat, tonsillitis, uvulitis, nausea, coryza and leucorrhoea. Most of these symptoms have been reconfirmed during the study and beside these styes, conjunctivitis, nasal obstruction, burning in rectum, pain in joints, boils and productive cough were also relieved by this medicine additionally while treating some other conditions and thus unfolding the hidden character of the medicine in various clinical conditions during the study.

A total of 6675 patients participated in this multicentre study at various Units/Institutes under Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy to confirm the symptom of Fagopyrum esculentum, as mentioned in the homoeopathic Materia Medica.

Key words: homoeopathy; clinical verification; fagopyrum esculentum

Introduction

The clinical verification in Homoeopathy is one of the important steps for confirming the symptomatology of the drug generated during the proving of the drug on healthy human beings. The clinical confirmation of signs and symptoms, observed during proving is essential for validation of symptoms of the drug and its therapeutic application.

Fagopyrum esculentum has had extensive proving, and though there is little clinical experience with the drug on record, some features are sufficiently well marked to justify their being classed as charectaristics. Dr. Dexter Hitchcock, was the first

prover of this drug who took 16th dilution of this drug daily upto 11th day and thereafter 3rd dilution from 11th to 23rd day in the year of 1873. Later on it was proved by another 9 provers who took different dilutions of this drug in different phases but mostly the 16th dilution was tried by them. Allen has given a detailed picture of this drug which shows its action in every system of human organism but specially on head, eyes and gastro-intestinal organs. He has recorded more than 830 symptoms in his materia medica.¹ Clarke has mentioned its charectaristics which covers mostly its symptoms pertaining to head, joints, skin and some general modalities.² Hale mentions that indulgence in buckwheat cakes are productive causes of various skin eruptions and found it curative in cases of eczema, erythema and intertrigo. Boericke mentions specifically about its action on skin producing pruritus.³

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The Council had undertaken Clinical Verification study of *Fagopyrum esculentum* in order to validate its symptoms and signs mentioned in the literature^{1,2,3} An effort has been made to explore its therapeutic utility by way of verification of the fragmentarily available data which formed the basis of prescribing the medicine.

The Plant

Fagopyrum esculentum is a small herb and is cultivated in Khasia hills , throughout the Himalayas. Nilgiris and western Tibet at an elevation of 700 to 4000 m. Its botanical name is *Fagopyrum esculentum Moench* and its synonym is Buckwheet. This plant belongs to natural order *Polygonaceae*, and its vernacular names ⁴ are –

English – Buckwheat French – Blenoir Hindi – Koti

Description: It is a herbaceous plant with a knotted stem, 20 to 60 cm tall, glabrous below. Pubescent in lines above, round and hollow, generally green but sometimes tinged with red, lateral branches growing out of the joints which gives off leaves alternately from opposite sides, heart-shaped or broadly triangularhastate, the lower long petioled, the upper short petioled to subsessile. Flower in clusters usually crowded and compact; sepals elliptic, obtuse, 2 to 5 mm long, dimorphic, one with short styles and long stamens and the other with long styles and short stamens. Fruit achene smooth and shining, about 7 mm. long with smooth entire angles much exceeding the sepals.⁵ It is frost tender. It is in flower from July to September, and the seeds ripen from August to October. The scented flowers are monoecious (individual flowers are either male or female, but both sexes can be found on the same plant) and are pollinated by Bees by and files. It is noted for attracting wildlife.⁶

Physical Characteristics : The plant prefers light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils, requires well- drained soil and can grow in heavy clay and nutritionally poor soils. The plant prefers acid, neutral and basic (alkaline) soils and can grow in very acid soil. It cannot grow in the shade. It requires dry or moist soil and can tolerate drought.

Edible Uses: Leaves are used as raw or cooked like spinach. The leaves are rich in rutin and so are a very healthy addition to the diet. Seeds raw or cooked having a nutty flavors, though it has a somewhat gritty texture . The seed can be soaked overnight in warm water then sprouted for a few days and added to salads. It can also be ground into a powder and used as a cereal when it can be made into pancakes, noodles,

breads etc. or be used as a thickening agent in soups etc. and is rich in vitamin B6. An excellent beer can be brewed from the grain. 6

Medicinal use: Buckwheat is a bitter but pleasant tasting herb that is frequently used medicinally because the leaves are a good source of rutin. Rutin is useful in the treatment of a wide range of circulatory problem, it dilates the blood vessels, reduce capillary permeability and lowers blood pressure and also used in a variety of haemorrhagic conditions. The leaves and shoots of flowering plants are acrid, astringent and vasodilator. It is used internally in the treatment of high blood pressure, gout, varicose vein, chilblains and radiation damage. It is best used in conjunction with vitamin C since this aids absorption. Often combined with lime flowers (Tilia species), it is a specific treatment for haemorrhage into the retina. The leaves and flowering stems are harvested as the plant begins to flower and are dried for later use. These are stored in the dark because the active ingredients rapidly degrade in the light. Some caution should be exercised in the use of this herb because it has been known to cause lightsensitive dermatitis.6

The seed are commonly used in colic, choleric diarrhoea and intestinal obstructions. Root decoction is used in rheumatic pains, lung diseases and typhoid and its juice used in urinary disorders. In China, it is used in pulmonary sepsis. Seed oil exhibits antimicrobial activity against *Bacillus anthrasis, E.coli* and *Salmonella paratyphi.*⁷

Buckwheat is a good source of lysine and other amino acids. The flour is reported to repress exogenous hypercholesterolemia and promotes accumulation of triglyceride in the liver of rats.⁷

Whole plant, dried or green, can cause photosensitization.⁶

A poultice made from the seeds has been used for restoring the flow of milk in nursing mothers⁷. An infusion of the herb has been used in the treatment of erysipelas.⁶

Other Uses: A very good green manure plant, it can be used to reclaim badly degraded soils and subsoils. Moreover, a blue dye can also be obtained from the stems.⁶

Methodology

Patients for the study were drawn from the OPDs of respective Institutes / Units of the Council. Their presenting symptoms and signs were recorded in the predefined case recording proforma to prescribe a medicine from the list of medicines assigned for clinical verification study. The medicine, which was found suitable for the patient on the basis of similarity was prescribed in 6c potency and the changes in presenting symptoms and signs were recorded during the follow-up visits. If there was no change in symptoms and signs for a significant period, next higher potencies like 30c and 200c were prescribed and in case no change was observed, even after change of potencies, the case was closed.

Study settings:

- Regional Research Institute (H), New Delhi
- Homoeopathic Drug Research Institute, Lucknow (U.P.)
- Homoeopathic Research Institute, Jaipur (Rajasthan)
- Clinical Research Unit, Jammu (J & K)
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In this multicentric trial of the medicine, 6829 cases (3311 males and 3518 females) were prescribed *Fagopyrum esculentum* during the period April 1982 to March 2004. The medicine was procured from the licensed pharmacy in various potencies viz. 6c, 30c and 200c.

Results

The data of all the cases were collected, compiled and analyzed. The clinically verified symptoms are given in Table-1 alongwith the number of patients prescribed on the basis of available symptoms and number of patients who got relieved. The symptoms superscripted with '1', '2' & '3' are in confirmation with the literature mentioned under reference. Moreover during the study part of main symptom (modalities etc.) have also been found to be relieved in patients which are not mentioned in literature. These are mentioned in italics and superscripted with N. In the column 'Improvement observed', the first figure denotes the number of patients who had that symptom and to whom the medicine was prescribed and the second figure denotes the number of patients who got relief in the said symptom.

Table 1: Clinically verified symptoms observed during the study:

Location	Symptom(s)	Improvement Observed (% in bracket)
Mind:	Forgetfullness ³ Depressed and irritable nature ^{1,2,3}	5 /5 (100) 16 /12 (75)
Head:	Headache ^{1,2,3} Bursting headache ^{1,2,3} - in forehead ³ - in occiput ³ - better in open air ² Bursting pain in both temporal region ³ <i>it makes the patient</i> <i>to weep</i> ^N Pain in occiput ^{1,3} - with stiffness of neck ^{1,2} Bursting pain in head better bending head forward ³ and walking in open air ² Dull headache ^{15,16} worse in evening ¹	5/5 (100) 62/31(50) 1/1 (100) 35/27 (77.14) 22/14 (63.63) 18/14 (77.77) 35/30 (85.71) 19/14 (73.68) 9/7 (77.77) 2/2 (100)
Eye:	Redness of eyes with lachrymation ^{1,2} Itching in eyes ^{1,2,3} Soreness in eyes ³ Soreness and itching in eyes ^{1,3} with swelling ³ and redness ^N Itching ,smarting and swelling of eyes ³ Coryza ^{1,2,3} – agg. in morning ^N – better at night ^N	2/2 (100) 64/35 (54.68) 25/18 (72) 156/150 (96.15) 87/80 (91.95) 1088/668 (61.39) 50/41 (82) 42/32 (76.19)

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Location	Symptom(s)	Improvement Observed
		(% in bracket)
	 worse at night^N profuse, watery^{1,2,3} with sneezing^{1,3} with crust formation ^{1,2,3} Coryza with recurrent sneezing³ Coryza of thick, nasal discharge¹ Coryza with with sore throat^{1,3} Soreness, rawness and crust formation in right nostril^{1,2,3} and offensive smell from nose, worse on waking from sleep and blockage of nose at night² 	12/7 (58.33) 750/565 (75.33) 932/615 (65.98) 5/5 (100) 159/90 (56.60) 31/23 (74.19) 5/5 (100) 3/1 (33.33)
Throat:	Excoriated feeling with swelling of tonsills ³ Uvula elongated ^{1,2,3} <i>swollen and painful</i> ^N Uvula elongated ^{1,2,3} – with sore throat ³ Tonsils inflamed with pain in throat on swallowing and sore throat ^{1,2,3} Tonsils swollen, with pain ^{1,2,3} <i>and fever</i> ^N Soreness in throat ^{1,3} – <i>with dry cough</i> ^N	89/84 (94.38) 21/13 (61.90) 24/22 (91.66) 15/15 (100) 17/14 (82.35) 5/2 (40) 5/3 (60) 1/1 (100)
Mouth:	Bad taste in mouth in morning ^{2,3} and nausea ³	7/6 (85.71)
Teeth:	Soreness in teeth ^{1,2}	16/10 (62.5)
Abdomen:	Pain in abdomen ^{1,2} – with watery stool ^N – worse after eating ^N	23/23 (100) 20/19 (95) 20/19 (95)
Rectum:	Stool hard, constipated ¹ Burning in rectum worse after stool ^{1,2}	13/8 (26.66) 62/49 (79.03)
Bladder:	Frequent urination ¹	2/2 (100)
Female:	Leucorrhoea ^{1,2,3} with pain in abdomen N - with itching ^{1,2,3} & burning in vulva N Leucorrhoea thick-yellow ^{1,2,3} - worse from rest ³ - with backache N - worse before menses N - excoriating N - with itching in vagina ^{1,2,3} - profuse N Leucorrhoea ^{1,2,3} Pruritus vulvae ^{1,2,3} - with redness N - causing burning urination N	21/16 (76.19) 21/16 (76.19) 383/277 (72.32) 136/98 (72.05) 194/132 (68.04) 50/35 (70) 37/26 (70.27) 96/73 (76.04) 37/26 (70.27) 834/594 (71.22) 185/134 (72.43) 32/24 (75) 9/7 (77.77)
Chest	Palpitation of heart with irregular pulse ^{2,3} Palpitaion of heart with oppression ³	8/6 (75) 51/32 (62.74)
Back:	Dull pain on back of neck better by bending head backward ¹ Stiffness of neck ^{1,2,3} Backache ¹	20/13 (65) 3/3 (100) 37/26 (70.27)
Skin:	Blind boils ^{1,3} <i>with pain</i> ^N – <i>worse in summer</i> ^N Dry eruption with itching and burning on whole body ^{1,2,3} – <i>worse at night, better from cold</i> ^N	63/39 (61.90) 6/6 (100) 3/3 (100) 2/2 (100)

Location	Symptom(s)	Improvement Observed (% in bracket)
	 Eruption on hairy part of the body ^{1,2,3} better from cold bathing³ Eruption with itching³, bleeding on scratching ^N Small eruption with itching and burning ¹ specially in axillary and pubic region ^N better from cold application ^N Small eruption with itching agg. at night¹ Itching on whole body with eruption¹ better by cold application agg. from scratching^{1,3} worse in bed³ and on undressing ^N Itching on whole body without eruption¹ agg. from sun ^N agg. from sun ^N agg. from warmth of bed ^N, better from cold³ Itching in arms and legs¹ worse in evening¹ Papular eruption with violent itching¹ Papular eruption ^{2,3} Pruritus on whole body¹ worse from cold ^N better from cold water application^N Pustular eczematus eruption on hands, legs, chest, scalp, forehead and face, discharge is thick, yellow, watery, offensive and itching with burning pain worse after scratching, night	(% in bracket) 17/13 (76.47) 27/15 (55.55) 331/191 (57.70) 85/53 (62.35) 316/184 (58.22)
	 and summer^N worse morning, evening and better applying cold water^N Pustular eruption ^{1,3} with violent itching³ with sticky watery discharge ^N better in open air¹ Red blotches with itching and soreness³ worse at night ^N Vesicular eruption with itching³ worse from cold air ^N 	4/4 (100) 174/113 (64.94) 1/1 (100) 32/16 (50) 17/12 (70.58) 6/5 (83.3) 478/272 (56.90) 7/4 (57.14)
Fever:	Fever with chill worse in afternoon ^{1,2} – agg. in morning and at night ^N – with headache ^N	108/82 (75.92) 75/56 (74.66) 17/7 (41.17)

Table 2: Clinical Symptoms:

The following symptoms in Table-2, (totally new and not found in source literature) are the additional symptoms that were relieved either fully or partially. These, therefore, emerged as *clinical symptoms* not mentioned in the Homoeopathic Materia Medica on *Fagopyrum esulentum*.

Symptom(s)	Improvement Observed (% in bracket)
Recurrent styes	8/6 (75)
Stye on left upper eyelid	10/8 (80)
 Stye on left lower eyelid sensitive to touch and much painful 	32/21 (65.62) 4/3 (75)
Soreness and itching in eyes with redness and swelling	156/150 (96.15)

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Symptom(s)	Improvement Observed (% in bracket)
Obstruction of left nostril with polyp	2/1 (50)
Chronic coryza, worse in winter	4/1 (25)
Coryza with cough and blockage of nostrils	47/38 (80.85)
Pain in nose with headache and fever	135/131 (97.03)
Coryza, thick, whitish worse at night	484/239 (49.38)
 Coryza with blockage of nose following nasal polyp with fever 	15/11 (73.33) 15/11 (73.33) 9/7 (77.77)
Pimples on face with itching	29/16 (55.17)
 Sour eructation worse after milk 	1/1 (100) 1/1 (100)
Itching around anus	26/24 (92.30)
Yellowish urine	5/3 (60)
Itching in male genitalia worse at night	6/4 (66.66)
Itching in pubic region	2/2 (100)
Offensive leucorrhoea	295/194 (65.76)
Leucorrhoea thin, watery	6/5 (83.3)
 Leucorrhoea thick, whitish with backache worse before menses with cracks in vagina worse applying water excoriating profuse worse from rest 	706/494 (69.97) 194/132 (68.04) 50/35 (70) 14/14 (100) 37/26 (70.27) 37/26 (70.27) 133/94 (70.67)
Senile vaginitis	37/26 (70.27)
Pain in extremities better by cold application	120/68 (56.66)
Pain from hip to small of back	37/37 (100)
 Fever with chill agg. in morning and at night with headache 	75/56 (74.66) 17/7 (41.17)
 Recurrent boil with hot skin 	4/2 (50) 2/1 (50)
Boil, red, painful	2/2 (100)
Boils on forehead and face	7/5 (71.42)
 Boil like eruption with itching agg. in summer 	323/211 (65.32) 216/139 (64.35)
Boil like eruption on face and knee joint	29/29 (100)
Cracks on finger tips with burning pain	14/10 (71.42)
Cracked skin with stitching pain and bleeding	74/43 (58.10)
• Dry eruption on head, leg and other parts of body	9/4 (44.44)

Symptom(s)	Improvement Observed (% in bracket)
Small eruption with itching and burning specially in axillary and pubic region	331/191 (57.70)
Feet crack with pain on walking	11/5 (45.45)
Itching on whole body worse at night, from sweating and from sun	4/3 (75)
Licken planus with dry scaly eruption with cracks and bleeding	47/42 (89.36)
 Pustular eczematus eruption on hands, legs, chest, scalp, forehead and face, discharging thick, yellow, watery, offensive and itching with burning pain worse scratching after, night and summer worse in morning and in evening 	40/35 (87.5) 4/4 (100)
Red wheal like eruption with itching	5/5 (100)
Urticaria worse in morning and from cold	5/5 (100)
Urticaria, red linear with burning and itching	15/6 (40)
Pain in chest better by lying on back	2/2 (100)
Cough of thick, whitish expectoration agg. at night	160/114 (71.25)
Profuse perspiration on axilla and on face ^N	5/3 (60)

Discussion

Keeping the pre-defined criterion in view the study was focused mainly on the verification of symptoms of *Fagopyrum esculentum* as available in literatures. Although this medicine is having vast action as been given in details by Allen¹ but in this study the sphere of action has been found to be primarily on female reproductive organs, skin, respiratory tract and in throat.

The main indication in the female reproductive organs is leucorrhoea and the character which has been verified in 277 patients after being prescribed to 383 patients (72.32%) is 'thick yellowish discharge' has emerged as a prominent character of it. Modality re-verified is 'worse from rest' is a special indication of this medicine in such condition. 96 patients were prescribed the medicine for the complaints of itching in vagina and 73 were relieved (76.04%) and this also indicates its speciality in this condition. In excoriating leucorrhoea also this medicine may be thought of since 70.27% improvement was observed in such cases. (Table-1)

The medicine is found useful in boil like eruption as mentioned in literatures and the same has been observed in this study too. Eruptions on hairy parts of the body, specially in axillary and pubic region, were also relieved in 191 patients after being prescribed to 331 patients (57.70%). (Table-1)

In cases of pruritus without eruption Fagopyrum

esculentum has been found useful (65.21%) and 'skin eruption during menses' was also relieved by this medicine.(70%) (Table-1).

In vesicular eruption with itching the medicine has been verified in 272 patients after being prescribed to 478 patients (56.90%). Similarly eruption where pus formation has taken place there also the medicine has shown its usefulness (64.94%). (Table-1)

In complaints of upper respiratory tract like 'coryza' and 'tonsillitis' the action of *Fagopyrum esculentum* was found to be useful since (75.35%) and (94.38%) of improvement was obtained respectively during the study. Its coryza is marked with sneezing whereas the tonsillar affections is marked with 'a feeling of excoriation'. (Table-1)

Apart from above, it was observed that '*Fagopyrum* esculentum' is also a medicine to be thought of in styes, blockage of nose, fever, cracked and bleeding skin, productive cough and urticaria, since these have been emerged as clinical symptoms during the trial. (Table-2)

This prospective observational study shows that *Fagopyrum esculentum* has some positive role in alleviating signs and symptoms of various clinical conditions as mentioned above. In many cases symptomatic relief was not followed by pathological improvement and various predisposing factors also could not be taken into account, which can be considered as a drawback of the study. But at the same

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time it is also a fact that a large number of patients have received the treatment for many of their complaints over a period of 22 years, as witnessed above, that speaks about the usefulness of this medicine in various clinical conditions which is the strength of this study. Apart from this the statistical significance of the symptoms could not be drawn due to the paucity of the technological advancement during the period when the study was conducted and moreover no control trial was conducted alongwith this study. Hence it can not be said that these symptoms, specially clinical symptoms, are very genuine one of the medicine and that fact can not be established. But since most of the symptoms have been verified and reverified in different seasons and different regions of India where different food and atmospheric exposures were common to the patients could not be discarded in considering the reliability of symptoms .

REPERTORY

A concise repertory of the verified symptoms, according to Kent's Repertory of the Homoeopathic Materia Medica has been compiled for the purpose of quick reference. Rubrics / sub rubrics in italics are new rubrics, i.e., not mentioned in the above referred repertory while rubrics / sub rubrics in roman letters are the existing rubrics of the said repertory which were reconfirmed by this study.

Physicians may include these rubrics in their personal repertories for their day to day reference in practice.

MIND

FORGETFUL IRRITABILITY SADNESS

HEAD

ERUPTION boils Forehead drv eczema on scalp PAIN Occiput stiffness of neck with bursting bending head forward amel. walking, in open air amel. Forehead Occiput air open amel. Temples weep, makes the patient to

30

dull evening

EYE

INFLAMMATION ITCHING PAIN burning (smarting) sore REDNESS lachrymation with STYES left eye painful, sensitive to touch recurrent upper lid lower lid

SWOLLEN

NOSE

CORYZA morning night amel. blockage of nose, with chronic winter cough, with fever with sore throat, with DISCHARGE night copious crusts, right side thick watery white OBSTRUCTION left night **ODORS** offensive PAIN rawness waking from sleep sore waking from sleep POLYPUS left SNEEZING frequent FACE **ERUPTIONS** boils forehead eczema

on forehead pimples itching PERSPIRATION profuse MOUTH TASTE bad morning nausea with TEETH PAIN sore THROAT ELONGATED, Uvula soreness in throat, with **EXCORIATION** INFLAMMATION **Tonsils** PAIN sore dry cough with swallowing, on **Tonsils** Uulva SWELLING **Tonsils** excoriated feeling in throat, with Uvula STOMACH **ERUCTATIONS** sour milk, after ABDOMEN PAIN eating, after watery stool, with RECTUM CONSTIPATION ITCHING around anus PAIN burning stool, after STOOL HARD **BLADDER URINATION**, frequent

URINE COLOUR yellow, light GENITALIA **ITCHING** night **GENITALIA-FEMALE** CRACKS **INFLAMMATION** vagina seniles, in **ITCHING** vulva redness, with causing, burning in urine leucorrhoea, from with burning from applying water **LEUCORRHOEA** burning copious excoriating rest from menses, before offensive pain in abdomen, with pain in back, with rest from thick thin, watery white yellow **EXPECTORATION** NIGHT THICK WHITE CHEST **ERUPTIONS** eczema **OPPRESSION** PAIN lying back, on, amel. **PALPITATION**, heart irregular pulse, with BACK **STIFFNESS** cervical region PAIN **EXTREMITIES** CRACKS skin **Upper Limbs**

Fingers

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tips of burning with Lower Limbs Feet painful, walking in **ERUPTIONS** bleeding after scratching Upper Limbs Hand eczema Lower Limbs Knee boils Leg dry eczema **ITCHING Upper Limbs** Upper arm Lower Limbs Leg evening PAIN cold applied amel. Lower Limbs Hip extending to back **FEVER** CHILL, with morning afternoon night headache, with PERSPIRATION PROFUSE face, on axilla, in SKIN CRACKS bloody stitching pain, with **ERUPTIONS** blotches boils

s blind painful summer itching, with painful recurrent red surrounding skin is hot itching, with

summer, in burning night cold application, amel. itching discharging offensive sticky thick vellow watery dry cold amel. hairy parts, on itching eczema itching, violent papular menses during pustules itching air open, amel. red scaly urticaria morning cold liner, red vesicular cold air wheal **ITCHING** morning evening night cold air, amel. cold application amel. cold water, amel. eruption, without scratching agg. summer sun, from sweating, from undressing, agg. warm, in bed, on becoming SORE

GENERALITIES PULSE irregular

Conclusion

The study reveals that the symptoms of *Fagopyrum* esculentum, as available in literature have been reasonably verified to be correct. A number of clinical symptoms also have been relieved by the medicine

which were earlier not reported anywhere and shows its wider scope of therapeutic action. Further clinical trials with suitable study design are required to validate such conditions and to enhance the usefulness of this medicine.

Acknowledgements

- We are thankful to Dr.V.T. Augustine, Dr. D.P. Rastogi, Dr. S. P. Singh, former Directors of CCRH and Dr. R. Shaw, former Deputy Director, CCRH for providing valuable guidelines in conducting and supervising the study.
- Thanks are also due to Dr.V.M. Nagpal, former Assistant Director, Dr. Anil Khurana, Assistant Director and Dr.Anil Kumar Vichitra, Research Office, for Co-ordinating and monitoring the study at CCRH headquarters.

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